

It's easy to fall for the

Breathe easy
at home program

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Mold Education**
- **Flu Shots**
- **FREE Smoking Cessation at the BPHC**
- **Heating Resources**

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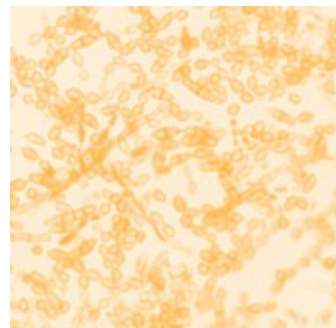
FALL 2010 / WINTER 2011

Mold & Moisture Basics

Mold is a common living organism that spreads by spores-microscopic 'seeds' that float through the air. When spores land on a wet area, they grow into new mold. **If there is no moisture, mold cannot grow.**

There is no such thing as 'toxic mold' but some people can be very allergic to mold. Depending on your sensitivity, exposure to any type of mold could cause mild problems or serious health problems like difficulty breathing or asthma attacks. **It is not considered healthy for anyone to be exposed to high levels of mold.**

There is no recommended test for mold or standard for what is a safe level of mold. If you can see mold or smell mold (musty odor), then you have mold and need to take action. If you find evidence of frequent



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water damage, then it is very likely that you have mold. Call **Inspectional Services at 617-635-5322** if you are worried about mold in your home.

What should be done about in-home mold:

- 1) Find the source of water and stop it.
- 2) Clean up the mold, wearing gloves, safety goggles and a mask or respirator to protect your health.
- 3) Do not paint over the mold unless you fix the water problem first.
- 4) Scrub walls, floors and hard surfaces with a disinfectant (1 cup of non-chlorine bleach in a gallon of water) and let it dry completely.
- 5) Small items (carpets, furniture and clothing) should be taken to the dry cleaner.

To prevent mold, use exhaust fans and open windows in damp areas like bathrooms. Wipe down damp walls after showering. Stop moisture before it starts by fixing leaks as soon as you find them.

New Materials on BEAH Website!

- Pesticides
- Mold
- Bedbugs
- Integrated Pest Management

Flu Shots

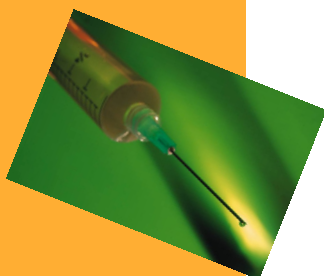
Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as vaccine is available this fall. While flu is unpredictable, it's likely that 2009 H1N1 viruses and seasonal viruses will cause illness in the U.S. this flu season. The 2010-2011 flu vaccine will protect against three different flu viruses: an H3N2 virus, an Influenza B virus and the H1N1 virus that

caused so much illness last season.

To learn more about the flu:
<http://www.bphc.org/programs/infectiousdisease/infectiousdiseasesatoz/influenza/individualsandfamilies/vaccination/Pages/Home.aspx>

To find local flu shot clinics:
<http://www.bphc.org/programs/infectiousdisease/>

[infectiousdiseasesatoz/influenza/flu_vaccine_finder/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.bphc.org/programs/infectiousdisease/influenza/flu_vaccine_finder/Pages/Home.aspx)



BPHC Sponsors Free Patch Giveaway

The Boston Public Health Commission is for the first time offering eligible Boston residents free nicotine patches to help them quit smoking. Residents who are 18 and older can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to receive the free nicotine patch and quit smoking for good. Not only does quitting smoking add years to your life but it will also save you a significant amount of money. The average smoker spends \$3,000 a year on cigarettes. While quitting smoking is never easy, using nicotine replacement therapy such as the patch can significantly increase one's chances of success. So call 1-800-QUIT-NOW today. Medical restrictions may apply.

For more information:

<http://www.bphc.org/Newsroom/Pages/TopStoriesView.aspx?ID=189>

BASIC SKILLS FOR WORKING WITH SMOKERS

November 30 and December 7, 2010 from 9AM - 4PM at Boston Public Health Commission ~1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Hayes Conference Room, 2nd Floor Boston, MA 02118. Free for Boston based organizations. Participation is limited. **Please email asthma@bphc.org for registration form.**

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Mayor Menino's Heating Tips

In accordance with the Massachusetts State Sanitary Code residential dwellings must be provided with heat from September 15th until June 15th each year. Heating systems must be capable of providing heat that meets a minimum temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and 64 degrees Fahrenheit from 11:01 p.m. to 6:59 a.m.

In the event tenants find themselves experiencing a problem with their heat they should

- Check the thermostat and make sure it is on.
- Check make sure you have oil in your tank
- Ensure that your gas service has not been shut off.

If the problem persists tenants should then contact the property owner/manager to remedy the problem.

• If the owner/manager is unresponsive, occupants should call the **Inspectional Services Department, Housing Inspection Division** at 617-635-5322 or Mayor Menino's 24-hour Hotline at 617-635-4500.

For more information: **MAYOR MENINO OFFERS HOME HEATING TIPS:** <http://www.cityofboston.gov/environmentalandenergy/>

Rental Heating Assistance

Rental Housing Resource Center:

Provides advice, information, and assistance to Boston landlords and tenants who have problems or questions about rental housing issues. (617) 635- RENT (7368).

ABCD Fuel Assistance

Program: Helps low income households pay fuel bills during the heating season. For more information call 617-357-6012. or <http://www.bostonabcd.org/programs/FuelAssistance.html>

LIHEAP Fuel Assistance Program:

Homeowners and tenants can apply for fuel assistance based on income eligibility. For more information call (800) 632-8175 or visit <http://www.liheap.ncat.org/Utility/MA/boston.htm>

Salvation Army Good Neighbor

Fund: To apply or learn about eligibility, call (617) 542-5420 or visit www.magoodneighbor.org.

Oil Co-ops: These are buying groups formed to help consumers purchase energy at lower costs. A list of oil co-ops is available at www.mass.gov/doer and you may contact DOER at (800) 351-0077.

If the owner/manager is unresponsive, occupants should call the Inspectional Services Department, Housing Inspection Division at 617-635-5322 or Mayor Menino's 24-hour Hotline at 617-635-4500.

